

REMARKS

I. Introduction

With the cancellation herein without prejudice of claims 9 to 13 and 20 to 22, claims 14 and 15 are pending in the present application. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for immediate allowance, and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

II. Rejection of Claim 12 Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Regarding the rejection of claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, while this rejection is not necessarily agreed with, to facilitate matters, claim 12 has been canceled herein without prejudice, thereby rendering moot this objection. Withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

III. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter included in claims 14 and 15. In this regard, the Examiner will note that each of claims 14 and 15 has been rewritten herein in independent form. As such, it is respectfully submitted that claims 14 and 15 are in condition for immediate allowance.

IV. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) and 103(a)

Regarding the rejections raised under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) and 103(a), although the merits of these rejections are not necessarily agreed with, to facilitate matters, claims 9 to 13 and 20 to 22 have been canceled herein without prejudice, thereby rendering moot these rejections. Withdrawal of these rejections is therefore respectfully requested.

V. Conclusion

It is therefore respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable. All issues raised by the Examiner having been addressed, an early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: /Clifford A. Ulrich/
Clifford A. Ulrich, Reg. No. 42,194 for
Gerard A. Messina (Reg. No. 35,952)

KENYON & KENYON LLP
One Broadway
New York, New York 10004
(212) 425-7200
CUSTOMER NO. 26646